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New York

President: Mr. Udovenko . . . . . (Ukraine)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 36 *(continued)*

Question of Palestine

Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/52/35)

Report of the Secretary-General (A/52/581)

Letter from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/52/571)

Letter from Namibia (A/52/704)

Draft resolutions (A/52/L.49, L.50, L.51, L.52, L.53)

Mr. de Silva (Sri Lanka): May I at the outset convey the Sri Lankan delegation's thanks to Ambassador Ibra Ka of Senegal, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, for his introductory statement on the report of the Committee (A/52/571). We wish to express our appreciation for the valuable work which that Committee has accomplished during the period under review.

As we look back at the past year, among the significant events was the signing of the Protocol concerning the redeployment in Hebron in January 1997. It was a positive development in that over 80 per cent of the city was transferred to the Palestine Authority. But the expectations and hopes that this would herald better times for the Palestinians have not materialized. On the contrary, the situation has taken on a gloomy aspect, and the chill winds of despair are blowing once again. The commencement of construction of a settlement by Israel in Jebel Abu Ghneim called Har Homa, to the south of East Jerusalem, has brought about new tensions, heightened the sense of crisis and impeded the peace process on which many hopes were based.

While the terrorist bombings in Israel are to be deplored and cannot be condoned, as they aggravate the situation, it still has to be recognized that Israel cannot disclaim its share of the blame, for such acts of desperation are to be expected when oppression increases and hopes are blasted. Such unfortunate occurrences might have been avoided had Israel heeded the expressions of deep concern expressed by the international community, as manifested in repeated resolutions of the General Assembly. Israel's actions reveal the determination to carry out its policies, regardless of these admonitions, in a unilateral fashion, violating all principles of international law regulating the conduct of an occupying power. They also indicate an unwillingness to honour the agreements into which Israel has entered and show a resolute attempt to alter the status and demographic character of Jerusalem.

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It is the widely held view of members of the international community that peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine is pivotal to the wider question of peace in the Middle East. The United Nations was primarily responsible for the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 and on that occasion determined Israel's boundaries. The remainder of the contiguous territory that was under the British mandate quite obviously fell within what was intended to be the Arab State in Palestine. The occupation of this land by Israel following the 1967 war was clearly illegal, and its continued occupation is in violation of the Charter. Its unlawful character has been underscored in successive United Nations resolutions. The United Nations has therefore a moral obligation to ensure the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinians. My delegation does not share the view that the United Nations is not the best forum for the resolution of this dispute, though it welcomes every effort, from whatever quarter it may proceed, to achieve a peaceful end to this conflict.

We acknowledge the valuable work done by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in seeking to safeguard and promote these rights. We also appreciate the humanitarian work undertaken by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in assisting Palestinian refugees. And we appreciate the assistance rendered in socio-economic fields to strengthen peace.

My delegation believes that it is an essential element for the successful accomplishment of the objectives of the peace process that the Government of Israel should adhere to the foundational principles which are reflected in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and to the fundamental principle of exchanging land for peace. Israel should complete the withdrawal of its troops from areas B and C of the occupied West Bank. We reaffirm our support for the peace process, which unfortunately is now in a state of frozen inactivity that very nearly resembles a body in a condition of rigor mortis. We call upon all parties concerned to help in the resuscitation and reactivation of this process in the interests of the whole Middle East.

It is futile to pay lip service to the peace agreement while systematically seeking to erode its efficacy by creating conditions on the ground that are at variance with the very foundations for peace, as they make a final settlement an ever- receding chimera. My delegation appeals to the conscience of all members of this Assembly to take some meaningful action to relieve the people of Palestine of their sufferings, which have gone on for far too long and are beyond human endurance.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I should like first to pay tribute to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and especially its Chairman, Mr. Ka, for the remarkable work it has done to support the Palestinian people, their struggle and their sacrifices.

As it does every year, the General Assembly is once again examining the question of Palestine within the framework of its consideration of this question over several decades. It adopted the partition resolution of 1947 related to this question, which it has followed closely, and on which it has adopted many other resolutions each year, under either the item on Palestine or the item on the situation on the Middle East.

In its resolutions on this issue, the General Assembly, in the name of the entire international community, underscored that the question of Palestine lies at the core of the Israeli-Arab conflict and that this just cause must be settled in a peaceful fashion so as to guarantee the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people in the conflict, particularly its right to self-determination. That right cannot be denied under any pretext.

In a number of the resolutions it adopts each year, the General Assembly has also expressed its full support for the peace process and the agreements reached between the Palestinian and Israeli parties, most recently in resolution 51/29 of 4 December 1996. The Assembly has also expressed the hope that the peace process will lead to the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East that would guarantee a just and peaceful solution to the question of Palestine. In that regard, the General Assembly has underscored the need to ensure scrupulous implementation of the agreements between the two parties.

Unfortunately, the developments we have witnessed since the last session of the General Assembly are not consonant with these appeals of the Assembly. On the contrary, the situation in the occupied territories, and in the Middle East in general, has taken a turn for the worse, thus giving rise to deep concern.

The peace process is today at a standstill, completely blocked by Israeli policies and measures that

repudiate the principles and the mandate of the peace process that began at Madrid. The most important of these principles are that of land for peace and those in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Israel has also violated all of the agreements reached with the Palestinian side and has evaded its obligations under those agreements, including the agreements on the redeployment of its troops.

Israel is not willing to respect the agreed timetable. On the contrary, it persists in its illegal policies and acts in the occupied Palestinian territory. It has not put and end to its settlement activities in the occupied territories, going so far as to step up those activities, building new settlements in the south of East Jerusalem, at Jebel Abu Ghneim. Israel is stubbornly continuing to build this settlement, despite all the repeated appeals made by this Assembly in the three resolutions adopted in the framework of the emergency special session convened in April, July and November this year.

Israel is again flagrantly defying the will of the international community and persisting in imposing faits accomplis and creating new realities on the ground, with a view to influencing the outcome of negotiations on the final status, in particular the final status of Jerusalem. Other Israeli practices and measures designed to modify the status of the city of Jerusalem have the same objective. These measures include the withdrawal of identity cards from the Arab population, the demolition of houses, collective punishment of the Palestinian people, the imposition of an economic blockade and other arbitrary measures.

The international community, whose living conscience is represented by this Assembly, has vigorously denounced these Israeli measures, which risk undermining the entire peace process because of the frustration and despair they have engendered in the Palestinian people, as well as in Arab and international public opinion.

Israel bears responsibility for blocking the peace process and all the risks of failure that that entails, as well as for the deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and the region in general. Israel has violated its commitments and evaded its obligations under the mandate of the peace process, Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), all of the other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the agreements concluded. We therefore call on Israel to put an end to its intransigence, procrastination and illegal practices in Jerusalem and the rest of the occupies Palestinian territory; in particular, immediately to cease its settlement activities and arbitrary practices aimed at modifying the status of Jerusalem, erasing its Arabic and Islamic character and altering its demographic composition; and to halt its imposition of economic blockade against the Palestinian people. The current Israeli Government must also implement all its agreements with the Palestinian side and take part in negotiations on a definitive settlement in accordance with the agreed timetable. Given this situation, the international community is called upon resolutely to stand up to the Israeli challenge and to put pressure on the Government of Israel so that it will respond to the demands of the international community, scrupulously respect its commitments and put an end to its illegal acts.

The General Assembly also has a historical responsibility towards the Palestinian people. This responsibility must continue to be shouldered until the legitimate national rights of that people are realized, in particular the right to the creation of an independent State on its own territory, with Jerusalem as its capital. The United Nations also plays a vital role in supporting the peace process through economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people. That role should continue, and the donors should also continue to support the reconstruction of the Palestinian economy.

In his message on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia, stated:

> "The blocking of the peace process and the agreements on which it is based foreshadows all the risks of conflict, violence and instability to which the region will be exposed. Tunisia therefore calls on the international community, in particular the two sponsors of the peace process, to act rapidly in exerting pressure on Israel to persuade it to respect its international commitments, as well as the mandate on which the peace process has been based from the outset, especially the principle of land for peace, and its commitment to respect international law and to implement Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and all the relevant General Assembly resolutions so as to create the appropriate conditions to foster a peaceful, comprehensive, just and lasting solution, to guarantee the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the withdrawal of Israel from the Syrian Golan and southern Lebanon and to enable all the peoples of the region to live in peace and security.

Tunisia will continue firmly to support the Palestinian people in its struggle to regain its legitimate rights and create an independent State on its own territory, with Jerusalem as its capital."

The President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I should like to inform members that in connection with this item, an amendment to the draft resolution contained in document A/52/L.53 has been issued as document A/52/L.59. This is now being distributed to delegations in the Hall.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): As many speakers have already mentioned, on 29 November it was 50 years since the General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II), according to which Palestine was partitioned into a Jewish State and an Arab State. Through all these years the question of Palestine — the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict — has remained among the most persistent and sensitive problems in modern history. Although this problem is no longer associated with a large-scale armed conflict, it continues to be a source of grave concern for the United Nations and for the world community as a whole.

There is no need to prove that a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian question can be achieved only on the basis of the full implementation by the parties of the agreements already reached in the framework of the Madrid peace process and Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), including the principle of land for peace.

At the beginning of this year many of us felt optimistic and cherished new hopes for further progress on the road towards peace. Unfortunately, this optimism did not last long. Again we saw a stalemate in the peace process. Moreover, the deterioration of the situation in the region forced the United Nations to resort to extraordinary measures by convening the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, which resumed its work on two other occasions in the course of the year.

In November, hope started to live again when the Israeli-Palestinian consultations on the resumption of negotiations took place. We welcome the active efforts of the sponsors of the Middle East peace process, the European Union and other international bodies, as well as of prominent political figures who are doing their best to bring the parties back to the negotiating table.

Throughout the year the Middle East has witnessed numerous acts of terrorism and brutal violence which have caused heavy civilian casualties on both sides and put into real jeopardy the whole negotiating process.

With this in mind, I would like to reiterate that Ukraine strongly condemns all acts of terrorism, irrespective of who committed them and whatever their motivations were. We recognize that any terrorist attack evokes the need to take comprehensive and resolute retaliatory measures against its perpetrators. At the same time, we are not inclined to think that vengeance can be a guiding principle in taking decisions on such measures, which should not be excessive.

Therefore, we call on the parties to refrain from actions that could undermine a very fragile atmosphere of peace. In our view, at the current stage it is very important that the parties make every possible effort to overcome the existing animosity and confrontation and demonstrate their political wisdom and good will. Ukraine is convinced that any options other than direct, peaceful negotiations, held in an atmosphere of mutual respect and confidence, will lead nowhere.

The delegation of Ukraine maintains that attaining stable peace in the region and settling the Palestinian question will be impossible without economic development of territories under the Palestinian Authority and their speedy integration into the economic infrastructure of the whole region. In this regard, the wide-scale economic assistance provided to the Palestinian people by the international donor community remains indispensable. Mindful of that, my delegation commends the efforts of donor countries and financial institutions in this direction. Moreover, we find it especially important that various programmes and activities carried out by the United Nations bodies should continue to be aimed at mobilizing international economic support for and assistance to the Palestinian people.

The delegation of Ukraine is also of the view that the United Nations should carry on shouldering its primary responsibility for ensuring the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of self-determination. The role of the United Nations as a guarantor of the international legitimacy of the question of Palestine cannot be diminished, since it was to a large extent this Organization that initiated this process half a century ago. Therefore, the eventual settlement of the question of Palestine should be reached with the active involvement of the United Nations. The

United Nations should prove that it has enough power and authority in influencing this process.

In conclusion, I would like to reconfirm Ukraine's continued commitment to support peaceful settlement in the Middle East and its readiness to make a meaningful contribution to facilitate further progress in the solution of the question of Palestine.

Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania): With the marking of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People fresh in our minds, the United Republic of Tanzania continues to believe that the Palestinian question is at the core of the situation in the Middle East. We therefore strongly hold that a just and reasonable solution and the restoration of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people are the keys to the goal of peace, stability and development in the Middle East.

The road towards that objective has been long and arduous. And yet the parties have come a long way. In the last six years we have witnessed significant movement towards the achievement of a lasting peace in the region. The Oslo accords, the Madrid Peace Conference and the Washington Declaration stand as testimony to that important movement.

It was in recognition of those positive achievements that my President, His Excellency Benjamin W. Mkapa, addressing the Assembly in October 1996, expressed our hope that we had:

> "reached a time when we thought that our dreams for the peaceful coexistence of the Palestinian people and the Israeli people were on the verge of coming true." [Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, plenary meetings, 22nd meeting, p. 4]

Our hope then was that those accomplishments would culminate in the achievement of the comprehensive and lasting peace we all desire. It was in the same vein that early this year the Hebron Protocol between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Government of Israel, leading to the withdrawal of Israel forces from Hebron, was welcomed. Events following the Hebron agreement are a matter of public record. Given the achievements and the hope that had been engendered, there was profound disappointment that Israel reneged on its negotiated commitments and took measures which seriously undermined the progress so far made towards peace and stability in the region.

Regrettably, in spite of two resumptions of the emergency session of the General Assembly and a series of other meetings, the confidence shattered by the actions of the Israeli authorities has yet to be recovered. It is therefore a matter of the utmost concern to us that 1997 seems to be a lost year. It is also a matter of serious regret that a year which was ushered in by the hope of the Hebron Protocol should record such dismal progress.

The current stalemate in the Middle East peace process is not in the interest of any of the parties. Indeed, it augurs badly for world peace. The Palestinian people have an inalienable right to live in peace and security in a homeland of their own. So, too, have the Israelis. But peace can come only as a product of justice. It cannot be brought about by war or the unilateralism of one of the parties. The parties have to recommit themselves to work for peace based on justice — justice for all, without exception.

It is imperative that the peace process should not be allowed to collapse. The initiatives of the recent past have been bold and courageous. The negative developments we have witnessed this year must not be allowed to derail the implementation of the agreements so far concluded. This Assembly and the international community have a stake in preserving the integrity of the peace process. We should therefore encourage the parties to sustain the process. The Government of Israel has a particular responsibility in this regard. It should not be allowed to flout the will of the international community with impunity. It is the responsibility of the international community and the sponsors of the peace process to ensure that Israel complies with all its commitments. The Assembly therefore cannot, and should not, condone any actions which seek to deny the Palestinians their rights or undermine the peace process.

We remain optimistic, and therefore express our firm belief that the peace process is the only path to peace and security for the Palestinians as well as for Israel and the region. To do otherwise would be counter-productive. The achievements of the past have to be consolidated. There can never be losers and winners. Peace in the Middle East has a global impact. We appeal for common sense to prevail.

Mr. Al-Adoufi (Yemen) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: The item entitled "Question of Palestine" is not new to this Organization; the General Assembly has been dealing with it for the last five decades. In an attempt to

resolve this issue it has adopted many resolutions which remain unimplemented.

However, what makes this session special, what makes its discussion of this item, "Question of Palestine", unique, and what, therefore, underlines its importance is that it is taking place following emergency special sessions held by the General Assembly this year on illegal Israeli acts in occupied East Jerusalem and the other occupied Palestinian territories, sessions which confirmed the illegitimacy and illegality of Israeli measures in the occupied Palestinian Arab territories. The great support demonstrated by the special sessions and the call for the convening of a conference of signatories of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, the High Contracting Parties to that Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, express the unanimous view of the international community on the stalling of the peace process as well as the need to resolve the Palestinian question on the basis of justice, peace and equality.

The stalling of the peace process, a process which began when the Palestine Liberation Organization and Israel signed the agreement on the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements on 13 September 1993, is due to the policy of the Israeli Government, which is characterized by the use of all ways and means to hinder the agreement, to shirk previous commitments to withdraw from the Palestinian territories, and to move along this track to the second step in the Declaration of Principles, which was sponsored by the United States of America.

The Republic of Yemen, on the basis of its positive stance in support of the Middle East peace process, in line with the position taken by the Arab Summit in Cairo in June 1996, reaffirms its concern for a resumption of the peace process in the region. It supports the Declaration of Principles and all subsequent agreements, steps, accords and protocols, particularly the Protocol on expanding Palestinian self-rule, with a view to attaining the final phase for the establishment of a Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital, the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes, the freeing of Palestinian prisoners and the dismantling of Israeli settlements.

The United Nations and the international community must continue to provide assistance to the Palestinian self-rule administration to enable it to face up to the current economic deterioration. They must also bring pressure to bear on the Israeli Government to cause it to renounce the policy of laying economic siege to the Palestinian Arab people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, establishing settlements, confiscating property, detaining tens of thousands of people, violating the principles of human rights and challenging the resolutions of international legitimacy. The international community must provide all types of assistance to the Arab Palestinian people so that they can tackle the problems of poverty, unemployment and disease.

The international community must also support the establishment of Palestinian economic and social institutions that would encourage the continuation of the peace process and propel the Israeli-Palestinian agreement towards the horizons of peace we all desire. In order to solidify these steps towards peace in the region, our country calls on those States encouraging the emigration of Jews to take positive measures to put an end to such emigration and subsequent settlement in Palestinian and Arab occupied territories. We call upon them to contribute to bringing pressure to bear on Israel to cease the building of settlements and the annexation of land by force. In this context, we call for a commitment to the resolutions of the various special sessions held this year, by refraining from providing any support for the building of settlements or any activities related to settlerism.

The question of Palestine is the core of the strife in the Middle East. Statements made on behalf of different international groupings at various times this year have expressed the wish of the international community to see stability and development in the region to be accomplished through recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people. We feel great satisfaction at the European summit held in Florence, where the European Union called for respect of the rights for the Palestinian people to self-determination, withheld recognition of the annexation of occupied East Jerusalem, and stressed the importance of that city for the parties in the region and, indeed, the entire international community — and not only from the viewpoint of the need to respect religious rights and institutions. The European Union also expressed the wish to continue its support for the resumption of final status negotiations based on the Oslo treaty and subsequent agreements between the Israeli and Palestinian sides. The summit also warned of the grave negative repercussions of the closure by Israel of the lands under the Palestinian Authority.

On the other hand, the European summit commended the cooperation by the Palestinian Authority with Israel in the security field, proceeding from the premise that Israel's security can be guaranteed through

a peaceful settlement that would respect the interests of Palestinians as well as those of other parties to the peace process. The Summit of the G-7 and Russia also called for the lifting of the embargo on Palestinians, which only increases their economic suffering, as well as for the resumption of negotiations on the other tracks.

Taken together, these statements are to us a source of assurance and satisfaction with the peace process as sponsored by the United States of America. However, the American sponsor is urged, indeed required, to advance the peace process with momentum towards the resumption of negotiations based on the agreements and protocols already signed, and in accordance with the principles on which the peace process was built.

This session coincides with the emergence of dangerous developments that threaten peace and security in the Middle East region. These are represented by Israel's continuing alterations of the character of Holy Jerusalem and by the Israeli authorities' continuation of illegal practices perpetrated against the Palestinian people. We condemn and denounce those measures and practices of the Israeli authorities and their repeated aggression against Palestinian citizens in Arab Jerusalem and other Palestinian cities, which have led to the deaths of many martyrs, the wounding of hundreds, the demolition of homes, the building of bypass roads reserved exclusively for settlers, the continuing siege of Palestinian lands and Israel's refusal to withdraw its forces.

Therefore, we wish to reaffirm the need to respect human rights in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which, we believe should be implemented with regard to the Palestinian people. We also call on the Israeli Government to cease its attacks on and sweeps conducted against Palestinian cities and villages. We call on the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel so as to compel it to commit itself to international norms governing human rights and to the two international pacts relating to human rights.

This grave situation in the occupied Palestinian territory is likely to lead to a deterioration of the situation in the region and a return to the whirlpool of tension and violence, which would threaten peace and security in the Middle East region and throughout the whole world.

My country reaffirms the need to make rapid progress towards a final, just and comprehensive settlement based on the Madrid Conference, as well as the resolutions of international legitimacy, particular Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital. We call on the sponsor of the peace process to push for its resumption in order to achieve a stable, just, and comprehensive peace that the region and the entire world can enjoy. We have not yet lost hope in what the international community can do in terms of efforts to reach these noble ends in order to avoid subjecting our planet to the scourge of war and terrible tragedies.

Mr. Abou-Hadid (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): There is no need to remind this Assembly that the question of Palestine has been inscribed on its agenda for 50 years. Our international Organization has witnessed the emergence of many new States. All of us welcomed them to this forum. Yet despite the long history of our Organization's linkage to the question of Palestine, we, regrettably, even after half a century, have yet to find a solution to this question.

Today we return to the question of Palestine once again, following the resumed tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly. At that session, the entire world stood to express its rejection of Israeli settlement policy, indicating in no uncertain terms that such a policy raised fears and concerns regarding the fate and future of the peace process. This is because such a policy could lead to dangerous repercussions, and adverse consequences putting the region as a whole face to face with potentially ominous developments. There can be no doubt that this firm international stand explicitly indicates that the international community cannot recognize the legitimacy of occupation, settlement policies, and the confiscation of land, all of which are measures taken by the Netanyahu Administration. It considers these measures null and void and illegal. Moreover, this speedy response by the international community constitutes an explicit indication that all States of the entire world have come to realize the extent of the dangers resulting from Israeli expansionist settlement schemes. They have started to realize that these plans will explode the peace process and will force the situation towards more crises, complications and the creation of climates of acute tension. Not only does this situation threaten to shatter peace and stability in the Middle East; its consequences will have a negative impact on peace and stability in the world as a whole.

Mr. Boyd (Panama), Vice-President, took the chair.

In the wake of the recent tour by Mrs. Albright, the United States Secretary of State, and on the eve of the tripartite negotiations in Washington, Israel announced its confiscation of 1,200 dunums of Palestinian land to expand the so-called settlement of Maaleh Adumim. At the same time, Danny Naveh, the Cabinet Secretary of the Israeli Government stressed that his Government does not intend to give up new land to the Palestinian Authority and that it will continue to promote settlement and support and expand existing settlements. There can be no doubt that in adopting such provocative and extremist measures, which run radically counter to the will and direction of the international community, the Netanyahu Government is in fact pursuing a premeditated and programmed policy designed to demolish the forthcoming negotiations with the Palestinians, collapse the peace efforts of the United States of America and fabricate a climate of escalation that will make saving the peace process desperately difficult, if not impossible.

The international community is sick and tired of the provocative stances of the Netanyahu Government. It has demonstrated a noteworthy sympathy for the peace process and the just and legitimate demands of the Arabs to regain fully their occupied territory.

This in itself reflects the international community's rejection of Israel's racist and extremist practices and policies as well as its condemnation of Israel's misleading statements and its profound belief that peace in the region is not attainable in accordance with the whims of Mr. Netanyahu, but that it can be achieved only through respect for United Nations resolutions and commitment to the principle of Israel's full withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and the restoration of those territories to their rightful owners.

Today, as we celebrate the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, my delegation would like to express to the Chairman and members of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People its appreciation for the role it has played in mobilizing international public opinion in support of the Palestinian people in their legitimate and just struggle to regain their inalienable rights to self-determination and to establish their own independent State on their national soil. In this connection, Mr. Farouk Al-Shara', the Syrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, addressed a message to the Committee on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity in which he affirmed Syria's steadfast support of the just cause of the Palestinian people and its sacrifices. He reaffirmed Syria's unwavering commitment to the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace on the basis of complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people both within and outside the occupied Palestinian territories.

A quick review of its recent report transmitted to the General Assembly indicates that the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories expressed its grave concern at the existing human rights situation in the occupied territories as a result of the settlerist policy pursued by the current Israeli Government. The report went on to state that:

> "On 2 August 1996 the Israeli Cabinet decided to cancel the previous Government's restrictions placed on the development of settlements since 1992. The confiscation of Arab-owned land, expansion of settlements and construction of bypass roads and quarries has continued unabated. New settlements have been built and their total in the Gaza Strip and West Bank is now estimated at 194. Settlement expansion in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan is also foreseen."

The report goes on to state that:

> "the most serious development in this connection is the decision taken on 26 February 1997 to build 6,500 Jewish housing units on the hill called Jabal Abu Ghneim. The beginning of construction on 18 March 1997 of the so-called Har Homa settlement in that location, which would complete the chain of Israeli settlements hermetically encircling Arab-populated East Jerusalem, has brought the peace process to a standstill." [A/52/131/Add.2, p. 5]

The gravity of the situation in East Jerusalem, the report notes, is compounded further by the recent withdrawal of identity cards of Palestinian Jerusalemites. That policy amounts to a silent deportation or even ethnic cleansing of Jerusalem's Arab population in a vile manner. All the Israeli policies being implemented in the occupied territories — such as the internal closures of Palestinian towns and suburbs, the continued restriction of freedom of movement, and the destruction of housing in Jerusalem and other parts of the occupied territories — are policies and practices to be condemned and must not be condoned.

In this context, on its visit to the occupied Syrian Golan, the Special Committee noted that Syrian citizens who express nationalistic sentiments regarding Syria, their motherland, are being repressed more harshly than before and that land in the occupied Syrian Golan continued to be confiscated for the expansion of construction of Israeli settlements and of bypass roads. The Israeli authorities continue to confiscate agricultural produce and cattle, and to exercise tight control over the water resources available to the inhabitants of the Golan, including rainwater.

In the field of education, the Israeli authorities have dismissed qualified teachers and altered the educational curricula regarding the political geography of the area, in addition to the non-recognition of diplomas granted by Syrian universities.

All of us follow the international efforts being made to salvage the peace process and to extricate it from the present deadlock and deathly freeze. These efforts are still thwarted by the Israeli intransigence and extremism that have led to the current deterioration and collapse, the loss of the language of political dialogue, the prevailing climate of tension, and the placing of the region again at the mouth of a volcano. All of these setbacks are the result of the approach taken by Israel and the mentality of its Premier, who has dropped the logic of peace from his perception and political lexicon and replaced it with the language of war, threats, aggression, settlerism and the abandonment of the terms and conditions of peace. That mentality has also led to his turning his back on the terms of reference of the Madrid peace process and on the implementation of United Nations and Security Council resolutions, and to persistence in adhering tenaciously to the occupation of the Arab territories, whose restoration lies at the heart of the problem and is the basis of any solution.

In a short period of time, the Likud Government has managed to cancel the whole preceding six-year period of strenuous Arab, American and international political efforts to end the conflict and achieve peace in the region on the basis of justice, comprehensiveness and the restoration of their legitimate rights to all legitimate claimants. It has emerged in its most inimical way in its programmes, positions, and policies towards any progress on the negotiating tracks. It has also declared its Biblical plan, returning to the line of argument with which the world is already fed up, leaving for itself the freedom of movement and option selection, and taking over Arab territories to meet alleged security needs which, it insists, should take priority over peace — an old argument that it continues to employ as a pretext for its aggression and policy of consolidation of occupation, and of faits accomplis on which it tries to bestow legitimacy. These policies are blatant evidence of Israel's rejection of a peace based on international legitimacy and of its insistence that it remain above the law and the instruments and resolutions of international legitimacy.

That is the reality, with Israel's leaders having washed their hands of the Madrid peace process, destroying it and attacking the agreements accomplished under it. Israel has resorted to escalation, established blockade and encirclement zones and set up antagonistic military alliances. There has been a failure to narrow chasms and remedy the crisis of trust, which increases in depth and seriousness, and we see the near end of the hopes for peace, brought about by Israel. Deterring Israel, curbing its policy and forcing its Government to change its conduct vis-à-vis the peace process through the application of Security Council resolutions and the terms of reference of the Madrid Peace Conference, forcing it to pay the inevitable price of peace and to recognize that this means the full restoration of rights and territories add up to a very pressing task for the international community, working cooperatively. The principles and resolutions of the international community are being trampled upon in full view of the whole world.

The peace that Syria and the Arab nation aspire to achieve is not a peace based on capitulation and humiliation and the extension of rewards and concessions to Israel at the expense of land, rights, dignity and national existence. We seek a just and comprehensive peace. Any statements to the contrary constitute tampering with the destiny of peoples, mislead international public opinion and protract the time of crisis.

Mr. Islam (Pakistan): The General Assembly has again gathered here to consider the issue of Palestine, as it has annually during the last 50 years. Our collective commitment to a lasting solution to the question of Palestine remains unswerving and consistent. Despite international appeals and efforts, there has been no substantial improvement in the situation, as the illegal Israeli practices in the occupied territories continue unabated, vitiating the peace process initiated six years ago.

For a number of years now, the General Assembly has been stressing the need to scrupulously implement agreements reached between the parties, and calling upon the sponsors and the entire international community to

exercise their influence in order to ensure the success of the peace process. Unfortunately, Israel has totally disregarded the calls of the international community.

It is our firm belief that no lasting peace in the Middle East is possible without the achievement of a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine. The realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the withdrawal of Israel from Palestinian territory are essential for any meaningful progress in the peace process. Israel must rescind its policies aimed at changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and status of the Palestinian and other Arab territories.

The special significance of the Holy City of Al-Quds Al-Sharif for the international community in general, and the Islamic Ummah in particular, requires no elaboration. Israeli actions to alter the legal status and demographic composition of Jerusalem are deplorable. Israel continues to build new settlements in the south of occupied East Jerusalem, ignoring the appeals of the international community. It has also refused to withdraw its forces from the West Bank, violating the agreement. This is a matter of concern for all of us. These provocative actions have once again shattered the hopes that the peace process would lead to the early exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination through the establishment of an independent homeland.

Pakistan's support for the just struggle for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people is well known. We have consistently stated that Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) continue to provide a viable and just framework for a durable and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. We believe that Al-Quds Al-Sharif, which has been occupied by Israel since 1967, remains central to any comprehensive settlement, and that no lasting peace in the region is possible without the return of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and all occupied territories to the Palestinian people.

It is incumbent upon the international community at this critical juncture to salvage the stalled Middle East peace process by injecting it with a new spirit and momentum. We must encourage the parties, particularly Israel, to faithfully implement all the agreements and accords so as to avoid any derailment of the peace process. It is our hope that the Israeli leadership will concede to the realities on the ground and resolve all pending issues with the Palestinian National Authority. Israel must demonstrate flexibility and a commitment to the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the question of Palestine, ensuring peace, security and stability in the entire region.

The draft resolutions on Palestine before the General Assembly illustrate measures that must be implemented by the Israeli authorities. We hope that Member States will support their adoption without a vote, particularly the new draft resolution [A/52/L.53] entitled "Full participation of Palestine in the work of the United Nations".

Mr. Takht-Ravanchi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Yesterday marked the annual International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. On this occasion, I would like to reiterate once more the support of the people and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the Palestinian people and their just cause.

During the last 50 years the question of Palestine has been prominent on the United Nations agenda. Less than two weeks ago the General Assembly, during its tenth emergency special session, adopted yet another resolution demanding the immediate and full cessation of an illegal activity in the occupied territories — the construction in Jebel Abu Ghneim — and of all other Israeli settlement activities. The Israeli response to this and other calls of the international community, as reflected in numerous United Nations resolutions, has been negative, and Israel continues to disregard these calls with impunity.

The question of Palestine, which lies at the very heart of the Middle East crisis, represents the most vivid and persistent case of disregard for international law and systematic violation of the fundamental human rights of individuals and peoples. The occupation of others' territory; widespread and massive violation of basic human rights, including the right to self-determination; the forceful imposition of the will of one over the entire region through coercion, intimidation and official state terrorism; the disruption of regional security and stability; arms race; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; the rejection of the demands of the international community; and even the violation of commitments willingly undertaken under the so-called peace process constitute the main causes of the Middle East crisis.

The expansion of settlements, in spite of the undertakings of Israel and in contravention of various United Nations resolutions, illustrates the fact that the Israeli regime considers itself above and beyond

international law, is not even committed to its own undertakings, and continuously seeks to consolidate its occupation through demographic and geographic changes in the occupied territories, particularly in Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

The report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories reiterates that the most disturbing aspect is that a relentless policy of settlement is currently being pursued by Israel regardless of the expression of deep concern by the international community. Other disquieting aspects are the mass withdrawal of identity cards from Palestinians in Jerusalem and the continued imposition of restrictions on the movement of the Palestinian population of the occupied territories, which have created untold hardships.

Furthermore, numerous reports and documents of the United Nations provide ample description of the systematic inhumane practices of the occupying regime. According to these reports, the overall situation of human rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories has deteriorated remarkably and the daily lives of the refugees have been made more difficult as a result of the actions taken by the occupying Power.

The root causes of the problem must be addressed if we are to find a just solution to the problems in the Middle East. The Middle East crisis can be solved only through the full realization of the rights of the Palestinian people, in particular their right to self-determination, the return of refugees and the liberation of all occupied territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif, southern Lebanon and the Syrian Golan. As our Foreign Minister stated at the general debate of the current session of the General Assembly, the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks peace and stability in the Middle East — a just and lasting peace that would receive regional consensus and cure this chronic crisis once and for all.

Mr. Tshipinare (Botswana): There was a time in the not distant past when one could not think of the question of Palestine without comparing it to the equally vexing questions of apartheid in South Africa and the illegal occupation of Namibia by apartheid South Africa. On the eve of the demise of communism, the bogeyman of racist minority regimes and the cold war, the people of Namibia at long last regained their freedom. The release of Namibia from the clutches of South African apartheid colonialism had a positive effect on the situation in South Africa itself, leading, ineluctably and in quick succession, to the long-sought liberation of South Africa. The liberation of South Africa with the suddenness of a lightning strike infused mankind with the hope and conviction that the sun was finally setting on intractable conflicts.

Unfortunately, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains largely unaffected, in any serious fashion, by the positive cataclysms of the so-called new world order. Palestinians remain a nation without a home, a nation under occupation, a nation whose staple condition is death and misery, a nation of refugees — a nation in desperate search of a collective identity in a State it can proudly call its own.

A just and permanent peace continues to elude the Palestinian people, and the peoples of the Middle East at large, including the Jewish people. The Oslo agreements and the historic Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements, signed on the lawn of the White House on 13 September 1993, have yet to bring peace and justice to the Palestinian people. The agreements remain partially implemented and consistently violated. Israel has continued to spread illegal settlements in the occupied territories, provoking in response deadly terrorist attacks against innocent Israeli citizens by frustrated Palestinians who see no hope in a peace process which has been in a state of prostration for more than a year.

The world community is one in its conviction that the people of Israel and the Palestinian people have an equal claim to Palestine as their common heritage. The world community contended for years that black and white South Africans enjoyed an equal claim to South Africa as their common homeland. White South Africans have finally accepted that fact. We do not see why the people of Israel cannot embrace their Palestinian brethren and put an end to the needless and unjust denial to the latter of their right to self-determination. This denial has caused untold misery and suffering to Palestinians and the people of Israel alike. And we need no convincing that, so long as the settlements continue to be spread in the occupied Arab territories in defiance of the spirit of Washington and Oslo, so long will the men of violence in the occupied territories feel justified in sowing death and mayhem in Israel. Do not give them such a justification. Do not play into the hands of those who would rather kill than make peace.

The Oslo agreements must be complied with by both parties, Israel and the Palestinians, if they are to survive and deliver peace to Israel and its Arab neighbours. We

are not oblivious to the fact that both parties face fanatic opposition to the peace process. In both Israel and the occupied territories, enemies of peace are at work. They are prepared to kill and maim innocent Arabs and Jews to preserve the status quo. No quarter should be given to these fanatics. Pandering to their resistance to change is inimical to the peace process, for they do not want peace.

Each party to the Oslo agreements has a responsibility not only to live up to its share of the Oslo commitments, but also to protect and defend these commitments from and against their predators, the purveyors of terrorist blackmail who have persistently struck deadly blows at every measure of progress in the peace process. There are determined rejectionists in the occupied territories and Israel alike. It is not only in the West Bank and Gaza that the enemies of the peace process in the Middle East are active. They are also very much active on the Israeli side. Therefore, the responsibility for protecting and defending the peace process is one shared in equal measure.

Botswana, let me repeat in conclusion, has consistently insisted that the construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories is a provocation that does no good to the peace process, to put it mildly. These illegal settlements cannot by any stretch of the imagination promote the peace process. On the contrary, they are injurious to the peace process; they have a debilitating effect on it. They make it impossible for the Palestinian leadership to deal effectively with their anti-peace-process fanatics. They are a boon to terrorism. They should be discontinued for the sake of progress in the peace process.

Mr. Sallah (Gambia): I am grateful to be called to contribute to the debate on the question of Palestine, the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, contained in document A/52/35, the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/52/581, and the letter from the Chairman of the Committee, contained in document A/52/571.

I congratulate the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Ibra Deguène Ka, and his colleagues on the admirable manner in which they carried out their mandate and produced a comprehensive report.

Equally commendable are the Secretary-General's continuous efforts for the promotion of peace in the Middle East, as evidenced in his reports.

The adoption of resolution 51/26 of 4 December 1996 by an overwhelming majority was expected to influence the course of events in the Middle East, since it embodied very important principles of international law. The Gambia, like like-minded members of the General Assembly, is in full support of those principles.

The Gambia is among the vast majority of United Nations Member countries which welcomed the following: the signing by the Palestinian authorities and Israel on 15 January 1997 of the Protocol concerning the Redeployment in Hebron, which resulted in the transfer of 80 per cent of the city to the Palestinian authorities; the establishment at the beginning of February this year of bilateral Israeli-Palestinian subcommittees to tackle outstanding issues such as the operation of the Gaza seaport and airport; the opening of the safe passage corridor from the Gaza Strip; and the release of Palestinian prisoners.

These were positive developments to which the sponsors of the peace process, the European Union and other world leaders have contributed immensely. Unfortunately, these gains were nullified by subsequent events, characterized by the ominous statements made by the Israeli Prime Minister and members of his Government and backed by continued military occupation; land confiscation and settlement in the occupied territories; construction of housing units in the settlement of Givat Zeev; demolition of Palestinian houses in the occupied territories; confiscation of identity documents of Palestinians; imposition of closures to drain the Palestinian economy, resulting in the loss of potential income; and systematic change in the physical character and demographic composition of Jerusalem.

The Gambia believes that Israel's illegal acts contravene international law as well as fundamental freedoms and basic human rights in the occupied territories. How long will these acts on the part of Israel continue to be deplored, not only in General Assembly resolutions but also in similar resolutions adopted by the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of African Unity and the Organization of the Islamic Conference?

These acts necessarily provoke violent resistance, which some would describe as terrorism and which we all condemn as an evil, committed by whomsoever, wheresoever, and howsoever provoked.

With the demise of apartheid and the end of the cold war, and with our entry into the twilight zone of decolonization, the peace process should be revived in earnest so that the inalienable rights of the Palestinians

can be restored in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and the principle of exchanging land for peace. The Gambia will continue to support the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3369 (XXX) of 10 October 1975, I now call on the observer for the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Mr. Ansay (Organization of the Islamic Conference): I am grateful for the privilege of addressing the General Assembly again during its present session.

The Middle East peace process was launched about six years ago with great hopes and expectations. Its main objective was to find a just and comprehensive solution to the question of Palestine and the related conflict in the Middle East, whose effects have left the Palestinian people in an unspeakably shattered state for almost half a century. Their reward for wanting to live an independent, hard-working and honourable life in their own land, under their own sovereignty and as proud members of the international community of nations, has been death, disablement, destruction of their homes, unemployment and violations of their civil and human rights by the Israeli authorities.

The signing of the Treaty of Peace between Jordan and Israel on 26 October 1994 and the signing of the Interim Agreement in Washington on 28 September 1995 were two of the few positive steps forward, after which, regrettably, the peace process has virtually returned to a stalemate. What has brought about this all-too-familiar scenario is the resumption of yet another series of violations of various elements of the peace agreements by Israel and the blatant and renewed acts of aggression by the Israeli authorities against the Palestinian people, especially following the installation of the present Government in Israel.

Recent meetings in the latest emergency special session of the General Assembly — held on 25 April, 15 July and 13 November 1997, respectively — have addressed the situation and condemned the failure of the Government of Israel to comply with the repeated demands of the Assembly for specific remedial measures. The report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/52/581 of 6 November 1997 sheds light on those Israeli acts of aggression that have thwarted the earlier positive trend and led to a dangerous and lengthy stalemate in the peace process.

The Palestinians, for their part, have naturally — and as is their national right — continued to resist the acts of aggression by the Israeli authorities. At the same time, they have demonstrated a remarkable capacity to shoulder such nation-building responsibilities as have come their way through certain avenues of the peace process, despite all those recurring hurdles that the Israeli authorities have been placing in their way, particularly in their reconstruction and development efforts.

It is gratifying to note that in these efforts the Palestinians are being assisted by concerned and well-meaning members of the international community, comprised of many friendly Governments and several intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The report of the Secretary-General also sheds some light on this aspect, stating:

> "The United Nations will continue to support the peace process, politically and through the provision of economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people facilitated by the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories." [A/52/581, para. 9]

Towards this end, the helpful role being played by the United Nations Special Coordinator and Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Mr. Peter Hansen, has not gone unnoticed, and I take this opportunity, through you, Sir, to express our appreciation for his work and that of his colleagues in the funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations who have collectively supported the development efforts of the Palestinian people under very difficult conditions. In this connection, we fully share the view of the Secretary-General that UNRWA should

> "be put on a sound financial footing so that the downgrading in its services to the Palestinian refugees can be avoided". [ibid.]

Through you, Sir, we would like to convey to the Commissioner-General of UNRWA the assurances of our continued support and cooperation in the important tasks his Agency is undertaking in Palestine despite reduced resources and in the face of Israel's failure to cooperate. In fact, the much-needed international humanitarian and technical assistance to the Palestinian people also remains hindered by the apparent non-cooperative attitude of the Israeli authorities, which still continue to enforce upon the population of today's Palestine the same restrictive

bureaucratic formalities that they had designed to deal with the people living under their military occupation in previous years.

In my two successive addresses before the General Assembly last year and the year before, I repeatedly stated that experiences of this nature were, at best, at variance with and, at worst, in gross violation of the spirit of compromise and cooperation which must now characterize all current and future dealings among the Palestinian and Israeli authorities in the implementation of the peace agreements. This has become all the more important now for establishing the credibility and practicability of the peace accords already concluded and for generating confidence in the negotiations for future accords.

We in the OIC would have liked to believe that the difficulties I have just cited are perhaps only a neglected carry-over of the way the Palestinians were being dealt with before, rather than a reflection of present-day official Israeli policies concerning the implementation of the peace accords. But, regrettably, the grim realities speak for themselves. The signal is again, therefore, that there is an urgent need for a change and that the time for that change is now. It will bring peace and the immeasurable benefits of peace for the peoples of both Palestine and Israel if the peace accords are implemented by Israel with the same sincerity and vigour as is being shown by the Palestinians today.

At this stage I should like to pay tribute to His Excellency Ambassador Ibra Deguène Ka of Senegal, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, for his astute and dynamic leadership of the work of the Committee, and to recall the close and fruitful cooperation between the Committee and the OIC in support of the peace process in Palestine. An example of this cooperation would be the proposed conference on Palestinian rights scheduled to be held in Brussels in February 1998 under the joint auspices of the United Nations, the OIC and the League of Arab States.

I should now like briefly to report on the highlights of the OIC annual coordination meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, held in New York on 2 October 1997, which reaffirmed the OIC's support for the peace process in the Middle East. Among other things, it also reaffirmed its support and backing of the positions of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in its negotiations with Israel for establishing its authority in the Palestinian territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and called on the international community to compel Israel to halt colonization activities and any measures aimed at changing the political, geographical or demographic status of Al-Quds Al-Sharif; to adhere to the implementation of all agreements signed with the PLO; and to resume negotiations on the Lebanese and Syrian tracks from the point at which they were suspended, and in accordance with the foundations of the peace process.

The meeting also reaffirmed that the accreditation of Israel's delegation to the General Assembly does not apply to the Arab and Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif, and called for the Palestinian participation in the United Nations to be consistent with the new realities, especially following the establishment of the Palestine National Authority in the Palestinian territories.

I take this opportunity to affirm the OIC's full support for the proposal to extend to Palestine the status and facilities available to the States Member of the United Nations that enable them to play their full and effective role in the functioning of the United Nations, including the placement of the Palestine delegation among the States Members of the United Nations in the General Assembly Hall.

Yesterday morning we commemorated the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People with a traditional meeting to mark the occasion here at the United Nations. A message from my Secretary-General was among those of the heads of State and of international organizations that were received from all over the world. It was a message of peace, a call for reason and an appeal for the extension of every support to the Palestinian people to help alleviate the suffering inflicted on them by many years of occupation, repression and denial of the exercise of their national human rights. It is now up to the international community — the Member States represented in this body — to react and respond in the manner that the time and hour demand.

In conclusion, I should like to state that in the ongoing peace process lies the opportunity for uniting efforts for the attainment of peace, tranquillity and progress for Palestine, Israel and all other countries in the Middle East and beyond, for they all stand to gain immeasurably from the long-awaited positive turn of events in that troubled region. It behooves the membership of this great world Organization to ensure

that in the very limited time of the twentieth century that still remains, this opportunity is not lost.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I wish to inform members that action will be taken on draft resolutions A/52/L.49 through L.53 on Wednesday, 3 December, in the afternoon.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.